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employ our unparalleled resources. Heretofore art has been chiefly nourished from traditions which kept it alive, even at times without the direct inspiration of artists. Thus the decorations so much respected and admired upon the walls of Pompeii are known to have been executed at that time of effeminate decadence by common house-painters from designs in their pattern books. We no longer can follow traditions, those of every nation and every age jarring upon each other, but slowly — very slowly — art will grow out of its new conditions, and a prominent factor in this growth must be eclectic compilations from the different styles of the past.

This German compilation offers a comprehensive and admirably drawn collection of woodcuts, and at so reasonable a price that few architects and decorators, after seeing it, will resist the temptation of keeping it near them, even though their libraries contain some or all of the standard works from which these examples are drawn.

ARTHUR ROTCH.

ARCHÆOLOGY AND HISTORY.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL RESEARCHES IN NICARAGUA. By J. F. BRANSFORD, M. D., Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. Navy. Washington City: Published by the Smithsonian Institution. 1881. vi + 96 pp., 2 plates, and 135 text illustrations. 4to. [Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, 383.]

THIS work is indeed, as its title affirms, a contribution to knowledge. It would not be difficult to find a blemish here and there, but when a young naval surgeon utilizes his leisure moments to explore an important region, even at the risk of his health and life, and to place the results before the world in a creditable manner, we should not withhold from him the applause which he richly merits.

Dr. Bransford made three journeys to his field of research, in 1872, 1876, and 1877, at first with the surveying party for a ship canal through Nicaragua, and, finally, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution. His labors were confined almost entirely to the island of Ometepec, in Lake Nicaragua. The island is graphically described, and especially the hacienda of Don José Luna, which was placed at his disposal. Here he had the good fortune to exhume 162 curious shoe-shaped burial jars and about 120 covers, together with many other relics of stone and pottery. The latter, having no striking characteristics, may be passed by. The burial jars and their curious caps or covers are the chief attraction of the collection.

The jars are of rough, reddish material, and are in shape not unlike the chubby little socks knit for infants, though Dr. Bransford thinks he has discovered, in the comparison of a great number, the indications of their having been originally designed to imitate an aquatic bird. These receptacles for the bones of the dead were found about three feet beneath the surface, in a layer of black sand, over which were ashes, cinder, and lava. The dimensions of each vessel, together with the cap and the contents are accurately given on pages 15–19.

Much more beautiful in material and decoration are the dish-shaped covers to the burial jars, which the author calls Luna ware, in honor of the proprietor of the cemetery. The biscuit is of a reddish brown, on which was laid a thick coat of cream or buff paint. The designs are in brown, occasionally in red, the brown and red in rare instances being found together. This ware is unique both in construction and decoration. The absence of Aztec and Maya conventionalities indicates its great antiquity. There is no attempt at imitation of nature, but certain fundamental patterns are modified and repeated in endless variety and with true barbaric freedom. The great pains which Dr. Bransford has taken to unravel some of these art enigmas, and to show the motive of the artist, will not be regarded as the least meritorious portion of his work. The volume is rather poorly illustrated, the drawings having been made, at least many of them, in the author's absence. A catalogue of the entire collection, giving the Smithsonian number and the locality, closes the work.

OTIS T. MASON.

GESCHICHTE DER MALEREI, *herausgegeben von* ALFRED WOLTMANN. Erster Band: *Die Malerei des Alterthums*, von DR. KARL WOERMANN, Professor der K. Kunstakademie zu Düsseldorf. *Die Malerei des Mittelalters*, von DR. ALFRED WOLTMANN, Professor an der Kais. Universität zu Strassburg. Mit einhundert und vierzig Illustrationen. Leipzig, 1879. xii + 483 pp. 8vo. Zweiter Band: *Die Malerei der Renaissance*, etc. Lief. 1–8, pp. 1–336. Verlag von E. A. Seemann.

HISTORY OF ANCIENT, EARLY CHRISTIAN, AND MEDIÆVAL PAINTING. From the German of the late DR. ALFRED WOLTMANN, Professor at the Imperial University of Strassburg, and DR. KARL WOERMANN, Professor at the Royal Academy of Arts, Düsseldorf. Edited by SIDNEY COLVIN, M. A., Slade Professor of Fine Art in the University of Cambridge. With Illustrations. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company. 1880.

WITH Prof. Sidney Colvin as editor, this translation of the *History of Painting*, by Drs. Woltmann and Woermann, will be accepted at its true value by English-speaking readers not previously acquainted with the original text, as one of the most important additions lately made to the ever-increasing list of books upon art history. When completed in a second volume, of which over three hundred pages have already appeared in Germany, it will supply what does not now exist, namely, a consecutive and thoroughly trustworthy account of Ancient, Mediæval, and Renaissance painting.

In some respects we consider the English version as superior to the German original. It has a more circumstantial table of contents, its chronological divisions are more clearly indicated, its chapters have headings giving abstracts of their subject matter, its illustrations are more distinctly printed, and, while the outward appearance of the volume is more ornate, its cover, in these days when gaudy bindings are in fashion, is in sufficiently good taste.

As a translation, it is excellent, for while, on the one hand, the facts and judgments of the authors are scrupulously respected, and all additional or interpolated matter in text or notes is marked with brackets, on the other, idiomatic English has not been sacrificed to an absolutely literal rendering of the original text.

The first two books contain a lucid account of Painting in the Ancient World, by Dr. Woermann. In Egypt, in the Mesopotamian kingdoms, and in early Greece, painting